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ON THE EVIDENCE
OF THE VERBAL 3rd PERSON SUFFIX *-sV IN URALIC

Abstract. In the olden times the Uralic languages involved in parallel both personal pronouns and personal suffixes. The clarification of the reasons for phonetic similarities of the consonant matter in personal pronouns and personal suffixes is not quite possible at present. The inflection *-sV of the 3P is used in Uralic or at least in all Finno-Permic languages, while the application could be inconsistent and lacking altogether in Finnic, being replaced in the latter case by an inflection derived from the pronoun root *sen. The Finnic personal suffix *-sen, due to its final component *-n, is not such a widely spread personal suffix, but its initial component *-se- does not exclude a link with the common Uralic or at least the common Finno-Permic suffix *-sV. It is probable that the use of the verbal 3P suffix *-sV can be observed in all Uralic (or at least Finno-Permic) languages.

Two papers by Ulla-Maija Kulonen (2001a; 2001b) can be considered bravely innovative from the aspect of historical Uralistics. U.-M. Kulonen does not believe that common Uralic possessive suffixes and personal inflections could have formed by agglutinating respective personal pronouns with preceding noun and verb stems, as Uralic personal pronouns are too irregular for that. She writes that personal pronouns as lexical items may be relatively recent innovations. Personal affixes are not necessarily a product of pronoun stem agglutination: the actual course of development may even have proceeded in the opposite direction.

U.-M. Kulonen's (cautious) supposition about the formation of the 1P and 2P personal pronouns from the respective 1P and 2P personal suffixes is, in fact, well substantiated and logical (Kulonen 2001a). This supposition, however, leads to a result according to which, in the distant past, the Uralic-speaking people could have communicated in approximately the following way. Someone was groping for the door of a dwelling and the one inside asked, "Who's there?" The outsider could not respond "I am!" because the 1P personal pronoun did not exist yet, so he said "Am!", i.e. identifying himself by 'am' since the 1P personal inflection of the verb was there already. To make matters worse, the intruder, having seen chunks of meat in the room, could have wished to say "Give me meat!" On the other hand, the intruder could have made use of his name, responding

first "Yombo!" and after that asking "Give Yombo meat!". Anyway, it does not look so impossible to converse like that. It is hard, however, to imagine a language without personal pronouns from the linguistic-typological aspect, even in the past, because in all modern languages of the world there are at least four personal pronouns: 'I', 'you', 's/he' and 'we' (see, e.g. Häkkinen, Luutonen 1981 : 56). After all, we are not speaking about the processes of original language birth, are we?

Accepting U.-M. Kulonen's supposition, we face another problem: why the 3P personal suffix (or more precisely, possessive suffix) *-sV did not become a commonly used personal pronoun in Uralic languages as this suffix is considered inherent in all Uralic languages. (It may even be so when we believe that in Samoyedic and Ob-Ugric languages the change *s > t* and in Hungarian the loss *s > ø* took place, although I am not quite sure about these possibilities, cf. also Marcantonio 2002 : 225—227). U.-M. Kulonen does insist that the 1P and 2P personal pronouns in modern Uralic languages are of a more frequent occurrence than those of the 3P (2001a : 182). It is not sufficient for an explanation, though. Proceeding from U.-M. Kulonen's supposition, the argument that carries more weight could indicate that in case of verbs, the 1P and 2P inflections were originally there but the 3P had no inflection, as referred to also by U.-M. Kulonen (2001a : 181). (From a linguistic-typological aspect the 3P form of verbs, when comparing the forms of all three persons, is the simplest form because it is logically an unmarked subcategory — see, e.g. Häkkinen, Luutonen 1981 : 55, 74). Consequently, the 3P personal suffix in Uralic languages primarily had a narrower scope of use (proceeding from this — a lower frequency of occurrence). There may be a definite correlation between the latter fact and a lower frequency of occurrence of Uralic 3P personal pronouns.

It would be appropriate to emphasise hereby that as I have never supported the supposition about the descent of Uralic personal suffixes from personal pronouns, neither can I consider it as correct to support, the way U.-M. Kulonen does, the other extreme: the descent of personal pronouns from personal suffixes. Above I have already indicated the linguistic-typological substantiation of the viewpoint. I would think that in the olden times the Uralic language group involved in parallel both personal pronouns and personal suffixes. The clarification of the reasons for phonetic similarities of the consonant matter in personal pronouns and personal suffixes is not quite possible at present. Besides, the same regular similarity occurs also in numerous other language groups (e.g. in Turkic languages, see also Künnap 2000 : 43).

I would also note that Angela Marcantonio (2002 : 227—228) has recently referred to a considerable irregularity of Uralic personal pronouns. Even more does she emphasise the irregularity of Uralic personal suffixes (Marcantonio 2002 : 225—227) and in case of the 3P brings forth "a (possible), 'horizontal' convergence between Ob-Ugric, Samoyedic and a Turkic language [= Yakut — A. K.]", bearing in mind the *t*-initial 3P personal suffixes of the languages listed (Marcantonio 2002 : 226). It should also be mentioned that Gyula Décsy represents a view in accordance with which there has been a shift in the Proto-Uralic *-te* > Proto-Finno-Ugric *-se* of the 3P personal suffix (Décsy 1990 : 67) as well as PU *tä* > PFU *sä* in the

3P personal pronoun, respectively (Décsy 1990 : 57). Likewise, Péter Hajdú considers the proceeding from the *t*-initial demonstrative pronoun as a possible case of *t*-type 3P inflections of Ob-Ugric and Samoyedic languages (Хайду 1985 : 328). On my part, I would like to show that there are numerous phenomena in Ob-Ugric and Samoyedic phonetics that can be explained by difficulties one has to face when learning Finnic(-Samic) type of language form. Namely, I think there is a good reason to suppose a language shift, in the course of which the ancestors of the Ob-Ugrians and Samoyeds shifted once from non-Uralic language(s) to the named Finno-Ugric language(s). One of the most conspicuous features among these phenomena is *t* instead of Finnic *s*, cf. e.g. Finnish *pesä* ~ Mansi *pit'i*, Hanti *pit*, Nenets *pid'e*, Enets *pide*, Selkup *pitta*, Kamass *phidä* 'nest'. Discarding all obscure speculations with proto-languages, I would admit that the interlinguistic associations indicated by A. Marcantonio make one wonder if the personal suffix *-sV* might be inherent only in Finno-Permic languages.

A widely spread view is that the Uralic inflections of the objective or definite conjugation proceed primarily from possessive declension in the manner of paraphrase as, for example, the Hungarian *várom* 'my waiting' > 'I wait'. Hereby the origin of the inflections of the 3P in various Uralic languages appears to be the most uncertain (see, first of all, Основы 1974 : 321—326). Now, to be on the safe side, we confine our attention only to Finno-Permic languages when observing the personal element *sV* and find only one language group here containing the definite conjugation — Mordvinic. Whatever has been supposed about the development of the 3P personal suffix *-sV* in the Mordvin definite conjugation, its traces are clearly there (see, first of all, Keresztes 1999 : 105—106), e.g. *pala-si̯* 's/he kisses her/him'.

However, in case of verbs the traces of this personal suffix exist also in those Finno-Permic languages that lack a separate definite conjugation. Anu-Reet Hausenberg writes that in the Komi western dialects some of the verbs are used with the vowel-ending, others with the *s*-inflectional 3P in the present singular, e.g., Vaška 3PSgPres -*e̮* ~ -*as*, adding that the phenomenon has no convincing explanation (Hausenberg 1996 : 181). Both in Komi and Udmurt the 3P contains the *-sV* inflection primarily in the future tense, e.g., Komi *muna-s* 's/he goes, s/he will go', Udmurt *mi̯no-z* 's/he will go'. This phenomenon cannot have a plausible explanation, either.

In Mari we find in the 3P singular of the present indicative the variation -*a* ~ -*eš* that reminds the variation -*e̮* ~ -*as* in the Komi western dialects. Generally, here the consonant *š* is not considered as a trace of the 3P personal suffix *-sV* but as a trace of an old preterite (or of the perfect participle) suffix *-śV* (Основы 1974 : 324). The trace of the personal suffix *-sV* is observed in the Mari suffix -*šV*, -*žV*, used primarily in case of the imperative and optative, e.g., *wiδə-žə* 'let him lead' (see, e.g. Хайду 1985 : 327).

Péter Hajdú believes that a similar discrimination in the 3P forms can be observed across all Uralic languages. In Mordvinic, Ugric and North Samoyedic the discrimination helps distinguish indefinite and definite conjugations to which South Samoyedic usage responds with intransitive and transitive verbs, respectively. In Komi the present non-inflectional and inflectional forms are intermingled. However, there is an observable ten-

dency to use the forms with an inflection in the meaning of the future tense, in the preterite it is the principle to use the forms without an inflection in intransitive verbs and the forms with an inflection in transitive verbs. In Udmurt the forms with and without an inflection have obtained the function of expressing the present and future tenses, respectively. P. Hajdú refers to Boris Serebrennikov's viewpoint, according to which an essential part of the Mari verbs, provided in the 3P with the suffix -*š*, are transitive, the verbs lacking the suffix are mainly intransitive. True, P. Hajdú does not regard this point of view as unquestionable. On his part, he is ready to consider the possibility that the -*š* is a trace of an original 3P inflection and not that of the preterite/perfect marker. P. Hajdú does not find a clear regularity in the use of the forms with and without an inflection in some Finnic languages where such a usage occurs (as well as in Saamic languages). Lauri Posti thought that originally the inflection was used in Finnic in case of medial-reflexive verbs to emphasise a close relationship between the subject and the activity expressed by the verb. P. Hajdú regards it as more likely that the inflection itself expresses or gives the verb its medial-reflexive meaning and comes from the 3P personal pronoun Proto-Finnic **sen* that secondarily obtained the meaning of a reflexive pronoun. (Хайду 1985 : 244—247.)

Generally, I think P. Hajdú's viewpoints very consistent and convincing. Besides, as far as the Mari language is concerned, what makes me tend to support the view that -*s* is an original personal suffix, not that of preterite/perfect, is the fact that the preterite suffix **-śV* cannot have spread in Uralic languages too widely, being inherent, perhaps, only in the easternmost Uralic languages — in Ob-Ugric and Samoyedic (see, e.g. Künnap 2000 : 33—37). In case of Finnic languages, the derivation of the -*s* inflection from the pronoun **sen* would have demonstrated a significant deviation from the consistent picture designed by Hajdú about the dualism of Uralic languages in the formation of the 3P, occurring in parallel by means of the forms without an inflection and by the forms with the **-sV* inflection (perhaps in Ob-Ugric and Samoyedic languages actually by means of the original **tV*-inflectional forms). At the same time, the variation of the South Estonian non-inflectional and *s*-inflectional verb forms reminds one of the general Uralic system, mainly its shape of realisation of the system in Komi. It is worthwhile to note that A.-R. Hausenberg indicates numerous exceptional similarities between some of the east- and southward Finnic languages and Permic languages, in particular in case of the Veps, South Estonian and Komi languages and suggests, as a source of these similarities, a kind of a lost link in the chain of languages in the north-eastern area of Europe (Hausenberg 1996 : 180, 182; 2001 : 318; cf. also Künnap 2003).

So we can see that the inflection **-sV* of the 3P is used in Uralic languages or at least in all Finno-Permic languages, while the application could be inconsistent and lacking altogether in Finnic, being replaced in the latter case by an inflection derived from the pronoun root **sen*. In case of the latter, it is interesting what Tibor Mikola has written in connection with the Finnic inflection **-sen*. T. Mikola regarded the comparison of the Finnic and Samoyedic reflexive conjugations as relevant. He writes, "Die nordsam. Sprachen haben auch eine refl. Konjugation entwickelt. [---] Die

Herausbildung dieser Konjugation ist bisher kaum untersucht worden. [–––] Die Herausbildung der ostseefinnischen refl. Konjugation wurde unlängst von Posti behandelt [–––] Nach Posti trat die neue, refl. Konjugation zuerst in der 3. P. auf, indem im Sing., als auch im Plural neue Vx-e erschienen, die die medialen verben von den anderen zu unterscheiden geeignet waren, nämlich **-ksen* für den Singular, **-kset* für den Plural. [–––] Die Vx-e selbst setzen sich aus zwei Elementen zusammen: **-k* (Präsenszeichen) + **sen* bzw. **set* (Personalpronomina). [–––] Die Herausbildung der nordsam. refl. Konjugation nahm ihren Anfang in der 3. P. Sing. und Plur., wo an den mit *-j-* (refl. Derivationssuffix) erweiterten Stamm die Pronomina der 3. P. Sing. (**-tVn*) bzw. der 3. P. Plur. (**-tVt*) traten. **-tVn* und **-tVt* setzen lautgesetzlich PU **sVn* 'er, sie, es' bzw. **sVt* 'sie (Pl)' fort, die als selbständige Pronomina ansonsten im Sam. verlorengegangen sind." (Mikola 1988 : 255; see also Mikola 1984). In the light of T. Mikola's considerations the contact between Finnic and North Samoyedic is conceivable in every aspect, it can really be expected that the reflexive conjugation occurs only in North Samoyedic languages which are located geographically closer to the area of Finnic than of South Samoyedic languages (see also Künnap 2000 : 49—50). Primarily, of course, in this case when the Finnic suffixes **-sen*, *-set* can etymologically be linked with the North Samoyedic suffixes **-ten*, *-tet*. But even when the link is lacking, there is a possibility that the use of the suffixes **-ten*, *-tet* in North Samoyedic developed by the example of the use of the Finnic suffixes **-sen*, *-set*.

Here I should make a mental stop and concentrate on the question if I did not hurry too readily along with the supposition that in Finnic the personal pronoun **sen* has turned into a personal suffix. I myself have (now together with Kulonen) denied that the common Uralic personal suffixes were derived from personal pronouns. The Finnic personal suffix **-sen*, due to its final component **-n*, is not such a widely spread personal suffix, but its initial component **-se-* does not exclude a link with the common Uralic or at least the common Finno-Permic suffix **-s*V. More-over, the varying manner of use of the personal suffix **-sen* in South Estonian verbs — partly without the suffix, partly with the suffix — is similar to the analogous usage of the personal suffix **-s*V in more easternward Uralic languages. For all the reasons above I would not detach the Finnic suffix **-sen* from the suffix **-s*V too easily. So be it that it has a final component **-n* and in Finnic verbs it is regularly preceded by **-k-* (mainly regarded as a present marker), e.g., the North Estonian *näi-k-se* 'it seems', *tulla-k-se* 'someone comes' (it is probably **-n* > ø).

To sum up on everything discussed above, I think it probable that the use of the verbal 3P suffix **-s*V can be observed in all Uralic (or at least Finno-Permic) languages.

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АГО КЮННАП (Тарту)

О НАЛИЧИИ ГЛАГОЛЬНОГО СУФФИКСА 3-го ЛИЦА *-s*V В УРАЛЬСКИХ ЯЗЫКАХ

Улла-Майя Кулонен не верит в возможность происхождения личных суффиксов уральских языков путем агглютинации личных местоимений к предшествовавшим им именным и глагольным основам. Она считает возможным противоположный путь: личные суффиксы 1-го и 2-го лиц перешли в соответствующие личные местоимения (Kulonen 2001a; 2001b).

В статье отвергаются оба мнения и предполагается, что в уральских языках издавна имелись как личные местоимения, так и личные суффиксы. Автор показывает, что во всех уральских (или, по меньшей мере, в финно-пермских) языках могут наличествовать следы глагольного суффикса 3-го лица *-s*V.

Таким следом может быть и глагольный личный суффикс 3-го лица *-sen* в прибалтийско-финских языках, который ряд исследователей выводит из прибалтийско-финского личного местоимения *sen*. Но нельзя забывать и о возможной связи этого *-sen* с личным суффиксом *-s*V.